

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT A 02985 170021Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00
NSCE-00 SCA-01 /065 W
-----059134 170026Z /72

O R 162325Z AUG 77 ZFF BRIDGETOWN
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN NIACT IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC 5857
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 2985

BRIDGETOWN PASS AMBASSADOR YOUNG PARTY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (YOUNG, ANDREW), HA

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S TRIP TO HAITI

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR YOUNG VISIT HAD VERY PROFOUND AND CONSTRUCTIVE IMPACT ON HAITI. PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL PREPARATIONS FOR VISIT INTENSE AND SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE. PRESSURE TO MAKE GOH ACCEPT TIME REP DIEDERICH AS MEMBER OF PARTY INTRODUCED DISTRACTING BIG STICK ELEMENT, BUT L'AFFAIRE DIEDERICH WAS ULTIMATELY OVERSHADOWED BY SUBSTANCE OF VISIT THAT BEGAN WITH SWEEPING PRESS STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS SUBSEQUENTLY HEARD THROUGHOUT HAITI. OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS RE-EMPHASIZED U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS GOALS AND PROMPTED POSITIVE GOH RESPONSES INCLUDING STATEMENT OF INTENT TO INVITE IAHRC TO VISIT HAITI. AMBASSADOR AND MRS. YOUNG SEPARATE FIELD TRIPS CONTRIBUTED ADDITIONAL HUMAN DIMENSION THAT GREATLY STRENGTHENED THEIR ALREADY WIDE POPULARITY IN COUNTRY. ALTHOUGH CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ATTEMPT TO LIMIT VISIT IMPACT, GOH HAS MADE SOME SIGNIFICANT COMMITMENTS WE CAN AND WILL PURSUE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PORT A 02985 170021Z

2. THERE IS ALMOST UNIVERSAL AGREEMENT THAT HAITI WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN AFTER AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S VISIT. ALREADY WIDELY ADMIRER BY THE HAITIAN PEOPLE, HE STRENGTHENED THEIR FEELINGS FOR HIM AND THE IDEALS HE REPRESENTS. THE GOH MAY NOT HAVE RESPONDED SO ENTHUSIASTICALLY BUT DEMONSTRATED UNMISTAKABLY THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH IT REGARDED THE VISIT AND INTENDED TO FOLLOW UP ON IT.

3. ANTICIPATION OF YOUNG VISIT HAS BEEN INTENSE SINCE PROSPECT OF VISIT FIRST LEARNED LATE JUNE. PUBLIC HAS WIDELY SPECULATED ON PURPOSES. GOH CLEARLY DID ITS BEST BOTH TO PREPARE FOR VISIT AND TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA, PRESUMED FOCUS OF YOUNG VISIT. PRESIDENT WAS PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS THAT VISIT HAVE CONSTRUCTIVE RESULT. PREPARATIONS MARKEDLY CONSTRAINED, HOWEVER, BY VERY STRONG FEELING AMONG OLDER MINISTERS AND ADVISERS THAT HAITI NOT APPEAR SIMPLY TO BE BOWING TO U.S. PRESSURE.

4. FOR THAT REASON, LAST MINUTE INCLUSION IN YOUNG PARTY OF BERNARD DIEDERICH, CO-AUTHOR OF CRITICAL BOOK ON HAITI, AND LEGALLY EXPELLED, UNFORTUNATELY RAISED EXTRANEIOUS ISSUE. GOH ULTIMATELY AGREED AT OUR INSISTENCE TO ADMISSION OF DIEDERICH BUT EVENT CREATED UNTIMELY PRELIMINARY ATMOSPHERE OF BIG STICK POLICY THAT WAS ACTUALLY NOT DISSOLVED UNTIL SECOND DAY OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG VISIT.

5. AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S PRESS STATEMENT, MADE AT BEGINNING OF SECOND DAY, STARTLED HAITIAN MEDIA THAT HAD BEEN WARNED BY GOH NOT TO RAISE PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS. BOLD, MEASURED SWEEP OF STATEMENT, AND AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S EMPHASIS THAT HE WAS NOT SPEAKING ONLY TO HAITI CREATED EXCELLENT IMPRESSION OF AUTHENTIC YOUNGISM. RUMORS TO CONTRARY, YOUNG REMARKS AT CONFERENCE AND SUBSEQUENTLY WERE WIDELY WIDELY AND REPEATEDLY BROADCAST THROUGHOUT HIS VISIT. MEDIA AND HAITIAN "TELEDIOL"

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PAGE 03 PORT A 02985 170021Z

WILL ENSURE SATURATING COVERAGE THAT GOH HAS SO FAR SHOWN NO SIGNS OF CONTROLLING.

6. CONVERSATIONS WITH MINISTERS BRUTUS (FOREIGN AFFAIRS), FIEVRE/JEANTY (JUSTICE-INTERIOR) AND PRESIDENT DUVALIER WERE NOT SCINTILLATING. BUT YOUNG MADE HIS POINTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS VERY EFFECTIVELY WITH ALL OF THEM, REINFORCED BY LETTER TO PRESIDENT ASKING FOR STATUS OF 21 PRISONERS. GOH MADE VERY CAREFUL NOTE OF ALL POINTS RAISED AND PRESIDENT HAS ASKED GOH AMBASSADOR CHARLES, WHO ASSISTED IN ALL OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS, FOR DETAILED REPORT SO HE CAN ENSURE FOLLOWUP. DURING CONVERSATIONS HAITIANS MADE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENTS INCLUDING (A) DECISION TO INVITE IAHRC VISIT, (B) PLAN TO RESTORE HABEAS CORPUS AND TO LIMIT DETENTION WITHOUT JUDICIAL HEARING TO CONSTITUTIONAL LIMIT OF 48 HOURS, (C) AGREEMENT TO INVESTIGATE, TRY OR RELEASE PERSONS ON YOUNG'S LETTER, ALL OF WHICH ARE IMPORTANT STATEMENTS OF INTENT AND REPRESENT EXTENT OF GOH PREPARATION FOR VISIT.

7. AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S IMPROMPTU VISIT TO BAPTIST CHURCH AND PROGRAMMED VISIT TO BONGNOTTE PROJECT ADDED WELCOME HUMAN DIMENSION TO VISIT. THEY HELPED REINFORCE YOUNG'S

IMAGE AS GENUINELY HUMANITARIAN, AND LATTER SERVED ALSO TO REINFORCE OURS, AND GOH, INTEREST IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT. MRS. YOUNG'S SEPARATE PROGRAM SAME DAY GAVE ADDITIONAL AND MUCH APPRECIATED HUMAN INTEREST ASPECT TO VISIT.

8. COMMENT: PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S VISIT ON HAITI HAS BEEN INCALCULABLE. NET EFFECT IS TO MOVE HAITI AND GOH FORWARD IN HUMAN RIGHTS DOMAIN. ALTHOUGH IT IS LIKELY THAT "DINOSAURS" WILL ATTEMPT TO CONTAIN IMPACT, GOH HAS MADE SOME IMPORTANT COMMITMENTS WHICH WE CAN AND WILL PURSUE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770857/aaaabwfs.tel
Line Count: 127
Litigation Code IDs:
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Message ID: b0d3f759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1588509
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S TRIP TO HAITI
TAGS: OVIP, HA, (YOUNG, ANDREW)
To: BRIDGETOWN STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b0d3f759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009